

## QUALIFICATIONS OF A PROFESSIONAL SINGER

By PHILIP SPOONER.

I am often asked by young singers desirous of becoming professionals what is the best and quickest way to attain success. I would advise that, first of all, you examine yourself with the care you would bestow upon any other animal you were thinking of training for a definite purpose, as, for instance, you would a horse you wished to make a racer. If you pass muster you should find some such qualities as the following:

First, a sound body, or one without serious organic defects; second, a voice which has at least one noticeably good characteristic, by which I mean sweetness, special power, unusual brilliancy or peculiarly sympathetic timbre; third, patience and perseverance; fourth, a strong will and plenty of optimism; fifth, (and perhaps more important than anything else), such a deep rooted love of singing and such a strong desire to make it your profes-

sion that you feel you cannot be content until you have made a big fight, for it nearly always is a struggle.

I am taking it for granted, of course, that no one without a sense of pitch, and what we generally speak of as "a good ear for music," will think for a minute of taking up singing as a profession. I have passed over valuable attributes which I personally feel are quite necessary if one is to become a really great artist—such as imagination, keen intelligence, a warm heart, by which I mean a heart of big sympathies.

Now come the "don'ts." Don't sing at all in studios, drawing rooms or even for friends until you have studied long enough to have something really worth while to offer. Don't attempt songs or arias that are not suited to you, just because the majority of singers use them, or try to. Rarely be satisfied with anything you sing, in spite of what anyone may say in a complimentary way, be he friend or unbiased critic. Don't, as many young singers do, depend upon the natural freshness of a beautiful voice for success. That brings applause and some dollars for a

while, but when the first bloom of the voice is worn off what is there left? A few dazzling notes, perhaps, if the voice ever had exceptional natural beauty, and that is all. The beautiful phrasing, the finished enunciation, the light and shade—in fact, the real art of singing, which should carry the singer successfully through middle life and make him always worth listening to, is not there. This is the result of not thoroughly mastering the technical difficulties of the art in the beginning.

Don't speak disparagingly of other artists. It is not kind. Don't criticize the work of other singers more severely than you do your own, and be sure always to profit by your criticisms. Don't copy the faults in the great singers, but only their virtues. Don't think that you can sing as well as a Caruso or a Sembrich. You can't do it, and only with years of patient study can you hope to approach such singing. Don't be so pleased and satisfied with yourself that you cannot brook hearing your own work criticised. Don't fail to listen to your voice as though you were listening to that of another. In short, qualify yourself to be a real critic by constant study and by hearing the best music. Then be your own



PHILIP SPOONER.

most exacting critic. Indeed, to attain lasting success in the field of music requires a long apprenticeship.

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### Developing Personality

### Through Technical Exercise

By FLORIAN A. SHEPARD,  
Associate, Shepard School of Music.

"That student is most likely to succeed," said Harold Bauer recently in "The Etude," "who conducts his practice as a continual artistic exploration." This statement brings home the fact, fast becoming accepted, that even technical exercises are almost worthless when they are simply mechanical. Imagination, intelligence, emotion cannot be isolated, but must grow from the beginning with the technique, and must be constantly related to it. Every phrase, every note, in fact, must be heard as well as played; must be felt, too; and first of all must be imagined and then willed. To develop ear, imagination, intelligence and will during the periods of technical practice is surely developing personality; such an end cannot be considered impractical because ideal.

Personality is the consciousness of power combined with the ability to exercise that power; it is understanding of the subject in hand combined with power of expression. Understanding, in this sense, appreciation, has a very broad meaning; the comprehension of a phrase, first, as a musical thing; second, as a thing related within itself and also to the whole composition; third, as a definite part of an emotional message. Obviously it requires a powerful imagination developed along several lines.

That this need of a flexible imagination has been widely recognized is evinced by the various methods for developing ear and mind. Many beginners are at present well taught to think and hear a note, a phrase, a piece. What they are not so systematically taught is to express all of what they hear and think. For this they need even keener imagination before playing the note; also intense will to accomplish the act and a critical ear to judge how nearly the sound produced approached the imagined tone. Moreover, the note played must be imagined, produced and judged not as a single tone but in relation to other tones. When this is done in any passage even a technical exercise loses its monotony, since it exercises ear, imagination and judgment, while developing physical power, and acts as a constant stimulus to greater exertion of will and consequent growth of personality.

The most difficult task in teaching along this line is to arouse the will of the pupil to secure intense action. The subject would require a volume for detailed discussion, but one point many

be made here: Any intense action requires an intense thought. By securing an intense gesture you can secure an intense thought. (Later, of course, the gesture may be modified when the habit of intense thought has been developed.) The proof lies in the fact that from every truly intense or vitalized gesture must result a tone which "commands," and which thus expresses conscious will or personality in technical exercises as surely as in the greatest compositions.

### Tali Esen Morgan on Church Entertainments

Tali Esen Morgan, for fifteen years director and manager of the summer music festivals held at Ocean Grove, and now head of the Tali Esen Morgan Musical Bureau, with offices in the Times Building, offers the following suggestions to ministers and church officials regarding the holding of concerts for the benefit of the church:

"Instead of blaming the people for going to the theatres, picture houses or to dances, why do not the churches provide amusements within their own walls? There are in New York many hundreds of splendid concert singers, violinists, readers, pianists and other artists who would willingly appear at church concerts for a very small fee.

"In a church some time ago I arranged for a concert. The officers were very certain that they could not take in more than \$100. I showed them a plan that I had followed in many churches with success. I had a book of ten tickets, printed on good paper and wire-stitched. Each ticket was worth 25 cents. We did not sell single tickets, but sold the book for \$2.50. Each buyer of a book became a patron and a list of these patrons was printed in the programme. More than that, any one holding one of these 25-cent coupon tickets could get a reserved seat on payment of 15 cents additional. We sold on the first Sunday 115 books. Nearly all the seats were reserved and we took in over \$500.

"Now some of the churches will not sell tickets on Sunday. They take money in the collections and any one can pay his pew rent on Sunday, but you must not take money for a hymn book nor for a church paper. Money is only a means. When giving money you are giving of yourself, and no one will object to service.

"One of the things that I will do in the managing business is to fry and bring together the artists in New York who want to sing or play and the churches which have a sincere desire to provide high class entertainments for the benefit of not only their own particular church, but of the entire community.

"I am glad to see that so many of the churches are putting in motion pictures. The church has been a gloomy sepulchre long enough. Religion and amusement ought to go hand in hand."

### The David Mannes Music School.

The David Mannes Music School, under the direction of David and Clara Mannes, opened October 10, at 154 East Seventieth Street. Mr. Mannes was for twelve years concert master of the New York Symphony Orchestra and until recently director of the Music School Settlement in East Third Street.

### Galloway Vocal Studios.

J. Armour Galloway, who, before his organization of a vocal and operatic school in Milan, was well known in New York music circles, has returned to America, after ten years abroad. Because of the war his work was cut short by the transfer of many of his pupils to the front. For the last year he has been continuing his work as vocal specialist and coach at his studios, 637 Madison Avenue.

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